

Summary of Comments Received About Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Draft

Updated October 27, 2009

The comments received were reviewed by city staff and the Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Advisory Committee on October 19, 2009. Further review is currently underway. Some initial responses from the Plan Advisory Committee meeting have been added.

Present at the October 19, 2009 meeting were: Thanh Dang (Public Works), Drew Williams (Public Works), Sgt. William Keller (Police), Len Van Wyk (Transportation Safety Commission), Charlie Chenault (Planning Commission), Cindy Reeves (RMH Community Health), Lee Eschelman (James Madison University).

- **Hillandale Area**

- Expedite routes construction between Garbers Church Rd to Dogwood Ave Change Dogwood Dr to Erickson Ave connection moved from a low priority to high. (1) (29) (36)
- Likes connection from Hillandale Park to HHS and from Dogwood to Erickson Ave. (3)
- Connect Wyndham Woods to THMS. Shared use path connecting THMS (37) (3) (29)
- Connection from Hillandale Park to Wyndham Woods/Neyland Ave should go along power line, not cutting through Rocktown Trails (3)
- Make sure there is a safe route for youth biking to school, especially along Market St to THMS and connecting to Garbers Church Rd (5)
- Stripe bike lanes on Dogwood to encourage more bikes. (26) – *Discussion on this topic was had at the 10/19/09 meeting. Committee members noted that Dogwood Ave is a residential street with low speeds and low traffic volumes. One committee member noted that they were not sure who else would ride Dogwood Ave if it were striped with a bicycle lane who isn't already riding it now. There was also discussion about the removal of on-street parking and that it may be an issue. One committee member asked what other localities do in residential areas. Committee members support Dogwood Ave's continued designation as a bicycle route. For additional information see Draft Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan 09/18/2009 page 6 for more information.*

- **Reservoir St Area**

- Improve safe access to schools and parks around Reservoir St. (2)
- Need safe way for Norwood Ave & Franklin St students to get to Kiwanis Park & Spottswood School (2)
- Suggestion bike lanes/share the road on Reservoir St from 33 to Walmart Area (20)
- Need to extend bicycle lane on Reservoir St. On both sides of I-81 (16) (27) – *Agreed that this is ideal and suggestion noted. But aware of challenges including homes between E. Market St. and Carlton St. that are close to the street, city must purchase additional right-of-way, area has some drainage issues. Known infrastructure issues also exist between University Blvd. and Neff Ave. including private properties and utilities.*

- **Northeast Neighborhood**

- Need sidewalks needed on Sterling St (5) – *At this time funding (grants) are not available for the purchase of right-of-way needed to construct sidewalks on Sterling St.; funding is more likely available for the construction of sidewalks. In 2009, the city contacted property owners to request consideration of donating right-of-way or easements and were denied.*
- Need sidewalks needed on E. Wolfe St. between Mason & Broad St. ()

- **Chicago Ave/ Park View Area**

- Chicago Ave is essential – high foot and bike traffic. Should be a major priority/High priority. (5) (17) (21) (22) (26) (29) (32) – *Improvements to Chicago Ave is planned for as indicated in the City's Comprehensive Plan (Chapter 11, Table 11-1), and the City's Capital Improvement Plan. Improvements include widening Chicago Ave from Mt. Clinton Pike to 3rd St to two lanes with center turn lanes, sidewalk, curb and gutter, and bicycle lanes. Requires major storm drain system from Mt. Clinton Pike to Waterman Dr, as well as property/right-of-way for the construction of transportation and stormwater facilities. Project is estimated to cost over \$5.4 Million. Timeframe is unknown at this time. Committee members discussed that sidewalks could be constructed now and that the city could go back later to construct all the road improvements, but it may be viewed as misuse of funds. This projects priority level over other city wide projects/perspectives were also discussed.*
- Mt. Clinton Pike to Vine St to Country Club Rd – needed (5) (26) (29)
- More bike paths coming from EMU to major roads with sidewalks.(14)
- Need pedestrian signals on Virginia Ave near EMU. (14)
- Likes the proposed sidewalk on Virginia Ave between 2nd and 5th St and on 3rd St. (25) (38) (26) – *City is currently working with Waterman Elementary School and citizen group on application for funding from VDOT's Safe Routes to School Program.*
- Need bike lanes or shared use path on Waterman to 33 (26) (29)
- Confusion at the intersection of Chicago Ave & Waterman Dr. (32)
- Suggest putting a stop light at Waterman Dr & Chicago Ave and at Chicago Ave & Mt. Clinton Pike with pedestrian signals and crosswalks (29)
- Suggest install bike path through one of the backyards off north Waterman Dr, leading to N High St. (29)
- There should be bike lanes on North Liberty just south of Mt. Clinton Pike to north city limits. (35)

- **Main St & High St & E. Market St.**

- North Main St should have bike lane from Noll Dr to north city limits (35)
- There are no major north/south route – Main/High? No major east/west route – Market St? Still can't get to the mall. (12) (13) (19) (26) (27) – *Committee members recognized that Dogwood Ave is a parallel alternative for Route 42 and that the future Bluestone*

Trail is an alternative to Route 11 and it will also serve many citizens for transportation and recreation. One Committee member noted that they believed S. Main St to be the best solution and that it would take political will to remove a travel lane to accommodate a bicycle lane. It was noted that Main St. is a state route. It was also noted that people take the route of least resistance.

- *Need bike lanes on entire length of High St. Add bike lane on S. High beyond Erickson to at least Walmart. (17) (18) (26) – Committee members recognize Dogwood Ave as a parallel alternative to Route 42. Current street width of S. High St is not enough to accommodate bicycle lanes without reconstruction and possibly purchase of right-of-way/property. City limits ends about 700' south of Erickson Ave and comment will be forwarded to VDOT.*
- *High St needs bike lanes, sharrows, or something. (37)*
- *Market St (east and west) needs bike facilities. (37) (38) – Further concepts for bicycle lanes (and sidewalks) on Country Club Rd. are being developed by city staff. Committee members discussed that if bicycle lanes were available on Country Club Rd, then it would be the preferred bicycle route than Route 33, which it runs parallel. Committee members discussed that Route 33 is not the best place to put bicycles and that there are connections available between to two corridors, ex. Linda Lane, Terri Dr, Carlton St, etc.*
- *Like that Country Club Rd. as a planned alternate (13)*

- **East Area**

- *Likes proposed routes on Old Furnace Rd. (7) (16)*
- *Likes proposed routes on Keezletown. Nice to have bike path and sidewalk on Keezletown Rd. Many people biking and walking there today. (7) (28)*
- *Suggest connecting downtown to Old Furnace Rd via Wolfe, Elizabeth, or Gay St. (20)*
- *Nowhere to cross I-81 on E Market. Anything to make riding on east side of I-81 safer. (12) (27)*
- *Need bike lanes on Country Club Rd (27) (28) – Further concepts for bicycle lanes (and sidewalks) on Country Club Rd are being developed by city staff.*

- **Downtown Area**

- *Add pedestrian signalization on Gay & Liberty. (25)*
- *Needs pedestrian signals downtown. Pedestrian can't see traffic lights to know which direction of traffic has right-of-way. (5) (26) – Pedestrian signals are being included/considered in future phases of Downtown Streetscape. The first intersections to have pedestrian signals will be ones along the Main St corridor between Bruce St. and Elizabeth St. Additional pedestrian signals will be added with future project phases or as funding becomes available.*
- *Frustrating if you are on a series of short blocks, you have to stop at every corner to push a button and get a pedestrian light to come on even if cars going by on green – why don't ped lights on automatically. (5) – Pedestrian signals are programmed to "come on" automatically in areas where there exists a high pedestrian volume.*

Otherwise pedestrian signals must be actuated (“turned on”) similar to how vehicles must pull up to the stop bar to be detected to receive a green light. When pedestrians are not present at an intersection, time is saved because the intersection’s signal is allowed to continue to the next phase of the cycle without fully counting down the pedestrian crossing time. More information:

<http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/index.php?id=1322>.

- Likes that there are a lot of sidewalks downtown (11)
 - Need bike lanes on Main St, Liberty St (17) (26)
 - Likes Mason St Bike Lanes. Remove on street parking. (12) (16) (17) (26) (27)
 - Concerned about removal of on street parking on Mason St. Where will people park? (30) – *Prior to any parking being further considered for removal, property owners will be contacted to discuss. City staff has discussed making improvements to the alleys behind properties to provide adequate off street parking on Mason St.*
 - Designated share the road path or lanes out of downtown (20)
 - Bike racks needed in downtown on east side of Main St. More bicycle racks downtown (37) (26) – *More bicycle racks coming downtown where space permits.*
 - Need sidewalks on some sections of Mason St, West View St, and Ott St. Why not fill in the gaps? (27)
 - Bike Plan should reflect drawings (?) included in Downtown Streetscape Plan. Suggest bike lanes on Main St from Cantrell to Franklin, and on Liberty from Noll to Cantrell. (35)
- **Blue Stone Trail**
 - Connect needed between Purcell Park and Pheasant Run apartments. Needs to be a bike path along I-81 connecting Pheasant Run to JMU. (35) (23)
- **Other Corridors**
 - Likes all proposed routes on Erickson Ave, Stone Spring Rd (7)
 - Wants sidewalk to be added on Paul St. and Cardinal/ Duke Dr. would help faculty, staff, and students get to and from JMU campus (33) – *This comment was also forwarded to JMU for coordination.*
 - City property west of Harrisonburg. Suggests feasibility study to be developed to look at options for building shared use path/non motorized path connecting Switzer and Riven Rock. (35) - *The City’s Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan is developed primarily to address transportation needs and this request/suggestion will not be addressed in this plan. This request for recreational use and falls under the Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Contact Lee Foerster, Parks & Recreation Director, to make additional comments regarding recreational use. Committee members discussed that there are also water quality/protection issues that need to be addressed here as this area is the source of drinking water for the City of Harrisonburg. Contact Mike Collins, Public Utilities Director, if questions. The City Manager’s office is facilitating the Forest Management Plan for the area. Contact Evan Vass, Assistant City Manager, more details or visit <http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/index.php?id=1370>.*

- **Other Infrastructure Comments**

- In NYC they have “bike boxes” which have been an amazing improvement. (23)
- Remove parallel drainage grates, they are dangerous (26) – *Drainage grates on Main St in downtown will be addressed with the next phase of Streetscape. Other drainage grates are being identified and will be addressed as we are able.*
- Increase priority of sidewalk on University Dr. from Reservoir to E Market. (38)
- Sidewalks need to be on both sides of every street. (5) - *The September 2009 adopted Design & Construction Standards Manual, www.harrisonburgva.gov/dcsn, now requires new streets to be constructed with sidewalks on both sides of every street and also for new developments on an existing street to construct new sidewalks along the frontage of the property. Existing streets without sidewalks are being prioritized for new sidewalk construction during the development of this Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan.*
- Where streets are too narrow, should install sharrow symbols. Until MUTCD adopts sharrows (expected 2010), the city should file for “experimental approval” with FHWA. (35) (26)
- Any thoughts about bike path underpasses? (24)
- Need more push buttons at stoplights for pedestrians. (27)
- Language for Climbing Lanes for bikes on uphill side of the street and have bikes take the lane on the downhill side. Ex: Boulder, CO. This would allow safer bike travel where there is not enough room for a bike lane on each side of the road. (35) (37)
- Shoulder improvements. Plan needs to have details concerning shoulder improvements for bicycle lanes. Example: VDOT shoulder improvements on Route 42. (35)
- Please do not use “share the road” signs or signs to mark bicycle routes. Feels that they are not good markers of “bike territory”. Cars do not necessarily adhere to signs. (37)
- At stop lights, have designated stopping line for cars behind cyclists to give bicyclists a head start – aka bike boxes. (37)

- **Infrastructure Planning Comments**

- City needs to prioritize bike infrastructure and sidewalks (26)
- Like plan’s intention to correct short sections of residential roads where pieces of sidewalks are not connected and likes the focus of constructing paths to common locations like schools and parks (2) (19) (26)
- Likes that plan attempts to connect paths to be able to cross city by bike. Things need to connect to be feasible. Need more connections. (5) (11) (10) (26) (18)
- Need more bike lanes that go to middle and elementary schools and grocery stores (8) (10) (12) (19) (26)
- Need more paths throughout downtown/campus area and in middle of the city versus around edges of town. (10) (13)
- For families and children, shared use paths are crucial. To create a shared use/greenway path would transform Harrisonburg in beautiful ways. The path could be crushed limestone as they use in Madison, Wisconsin or Goshen, Indiana. (26)

- Paths for commuters versus recreational bikers (10)
- Need more commitment from JMU. (24)
- Include bicycle and pedestrian planning in all new development/construction (6)
- Like that there is a lot of momentum and understands that city has momentum BUT... (13)
- Weigh cost against density of population in each sidewalk project area and get the most improvement for lowest cost first. (2)
- Be aggressive. If you build it then the riders will use it. A more ambitious plan wouldn't hurt, wants to see a more comprehensive plan. (10) (21)
- Do survey of where cyclists ride. This is where bike lane priorities should go. (13) (17)
- [The Plan] is working, I see the results! Thanks for all your work! It's a start 😊 The fact that this plan exists is great. Awesome work! A step in the right direction. (4) (8) (9) (6) (12) (16) (17) (20) (21) (22) (24) (31) (32)
- I support the bike/ped plan. I greatly appreciate the plan. (36) (37)
- Need more "complete streets" in the plan. (35) (37)
- Has City approached County about putting together an MPO Bike/Ped Plan? *(More details in comment form)* (39)
- *A committee member suggested that traffic calming should be interwoven with the Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan and that traffic calming practices helps bicyclists and pedestrians. It was also suggested that specific projects may be integrated with the Plan.*

- **Enforcement & Education Comments**

- Suggests cyclists be ticketed when they violate traffic laws. Better cycling would promote more respect from motorists. Would like to see more education & enforcement of laws pertaining to both cyclists and motorists. If there is a large influx of riders who don't follow bike rules, it isn't safe for anyone and creates hostility towards bikes. (4) (9) (10)
- Cars parking too close to corners mass visibility, big problem in NE neighborhood (5)
- Is it necessary to stop all traffic for pedestrians to cross? (5) – *"All red pedestrian phases" have only been implemented in very high pedestrian volume areas and is not encouraged for use throughout the city. See Draft Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan 09/18/2009 page 12 for additional information.*
- Hope City can combine education/outreach necessary to help citizens seen the many personal/societal benefits of a bike/ped friendly community. (39) - *Citizens can participate in the City's Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee, which meets quarterly, to provide feedback, help, and volunteer to further develop education and outreach materials and opportunities. To join the mailing list visit www.harrisonburgva.gov/bikeped. The Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (HRMPO) also has a Bicycle & Pedestrian Education Committee, and there are also many other local nonprofit groups who work on education and outreach. See Draft Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan 09/18/2009 page 22 for listing.*

- **Funding Comments**

- Use volunteers to help maintain trails, like in National Forest. Allow neighborhood/community groups to volunteer time to put in signage on “share the road routes” (16) (20) – *Signs along the roadway will continue to be installed by city staff due to liability and traffic regulations. However, we may consider developing a program for volunteers to help develop or maintain trails, such as the future Bluestone Trail. The Bluestone Trail will be paved.*
- Raise city taxes just slightly as other great cities do to put in basic infrastructure. Consider borrowing money like city does for new roads and schools. (26)
- Can a financial requirement or annual percentage increase to the bike/ped fund be stated in the plan? (35)
- The bike plan is very piece meal and too dependent on further, long term, development for implementation – means we will be waiting a very long time for changes. Hope city can commit resources to implement plan sooner rather than later. (37) (39)

- **Comments forwarded to Rockingham County/VDOT**

- Need to connect bike lane from Harrisonburg to Dayton on Rt. 42. (18)
- Need bike lanes on entire length of High St. Add bike lane on S. High beyond Erickson to at least Walmart. (17) (18) (26)